Harold Weisberg
Rt. 8, Frederick, Md. 21701
12/6/73

Dear Mr. Rothschild,

Thanks for your letter of the 3rd. I look forward to hearing from Mr. Sherrill when he has completed his manuscript. Should you at any time before then want an independent judgement of what I have been working on, in terms of your specific interests as wenll as in toto, which I think you may in time come to see could also interest you as much if not more, a young friend of Bud's and mine is working on this aspect with me. He is Jim Lesar, 1231 4 St., SW, Washington, D.C. 20024; 202/484-6023. Jim is a lawyer.

There is now nothing that can be done about it, but today is the day by which something should have been done. I am apprehensive that today may also be the beginning of a new era in our country.

Looking backward, I regret very much that I was so preoccupied with what I have been working on that I did not have time to think things through before you phoned. Had I, I would have realized that what happened to Justice Fortas interested me at the time it happened and it is included, in a form I no longer remember clearly, in a 1968 book I could not get printed. This is to say a book I wrote in 1968 and then added to during the early days of the Nixon administration. Later I was able to get part of it published as Frame-Up. The original work is titled Coup d'Etat. I look back on it not without some pride because the part that never got into print pretty accurately forecast what has come to pass. Passages, written years in advance of the testimony before the Ervin committee read like that testimony. I saw what I termed an Ameriform coup d'etat taking place and the assault on Justice Fortas as part of it.

From this I know I have a rudimentary file on those events. However, I am certain there is much more available and at some time I would want to go over a fairly full file, if it has been collected. There is a good probability that there will be duplications of names and that these can lead to fairly substantial evidence.

If Bud told you anything at all about me, he probably said I try to be honest and straightforward, even when I know it can be against my interest. This I told you that I would expect secret evidence to have been memory-holed by now but that public materials could not be. Two of Mr. Sherrill's books I have reflect his understanding of what can be done with the proper assembling of the non-secret, so I think he will understand this. I now think that a thorough ransacking of the non-secret should tie the past to the Watergating present. Several clear connections are beginning to emerge in Jim's tracing of some of my newer evidence. Not leads, evidence, proofs.

One of the problems with my work has been a lack of resources. In what I am now working on that I think will interest you I have some checking to do in Mexico City. Jim may be able to do enough in Washington, from what may be available there, and he is going to try to find time for it beginning today, but it is also possible that there will have to be checking down there. This is a matter of extreme delicacy. So, I ask if you have a thoroughly dependable person there who can be trusted to do what is easy, this simple checking, and what is not easy, remain silent about it.

There is an odd facet in all of this that may interest you, perhaps as a novelist relishes a strange twist. Let me preface this by telling you that I knew both Fortases slightly in the past. They may not remember me. Carol was a young lawyer with the Labor Board who sometimes helped the Senate committee for which I worked back in the 30s. (And like my wife, she then wore lisle stocking in anti-Japanese protest.) As a lawyer, the Justice represented me and others when we were the victims of the kind of thing that befell him. After he returned to private practise I tried without success to interest him in my work. He did not find time to discuss it with me so he never had the chance

Jim, when you give this to Bud, please tell him about the YAF pattern you also have observed. I have been collecting a file on this so I was looking for it and I think I have more than you have indicated. They permeate, they and their older mentors and associates.

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Because I do think we share interests, I also think there is more you should know about me.

I am not what is generally understood as an investigator and in OSS I was not a spook. Bud will tell you that I have never gone out to get anything for him without coming back with as much as he expected or more. He will remember that none of this, no matter how farout it may have seemed, has not stacked up. Right now he has such a case, where it was the word of some of the most disreputable against that of one of the country's best-known and most successful lawyers. What I gave him was more than enough for him to file in court and he did file it. Because I am financially immobile it took two years to get added corroboration, but the man who had it, when he came to Washington two weeks ago, brought it with him. Jim has it, is going over those contemporaneous records, and tells me they are confirmatory and in point. Jim will remember more of these cases than Bud. Partly from my experiences, partly from the overview and general theories from which I work, I often see what the law-trained mind does not. The experiences that have been most helpful are those investigating for the Senate, those of an investigative reporter, and perhaps most of all, those as an analyst in intelligence. The closest I ever came to being a spook was to give information to British Intelligence before Pearl Habbor, when I did what I believe remains the definitive work on Nazi cartels. (I did predict Pearl Harbor and all the Japanese then and later did. It was published less than three months before that attack.) The reputation I built in intelligence caused all sorts of jobs others could not do to be bounced to me, from all the branches, even the White House when others had failed. In no case did I have to go to other than existing sources to get what was needed. The job that awaited me, based on my investigative-reporting reputation, when my security was cleared, comes to mind as an illustration, partly because of a pleasing reminder of it more than 20 years later when I was trying to get my first book published. Four of our men who had volunteered for a behind-the lines drop had been convicted of an attack on military police in a Washington suburb. The conviction had been sustained on appeal and they were serving sentences. Six weeks after I started they walked out, free, and I interviewed no single witness. I worked entirely on the existing records, putting them together as they had not been. You may recall that we had some pretty fair lawyers in OSS.

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As I do look forward to hearing from Mr. Sherrill, I also hope that your own affairs will bring you near here so we can meet and talk and so that you may question me if you have the interest. I believe you may find that your primary interest is part of what led to the Watergate in the broadest sense, that it is connected with those who figure in it, and that for all the work that has been done and all that has been written about the Watergate, I have done work that others have not and have what today could be decisive, if anything can be.

And if events do not overtake us.

Sincerely,

CC: [illegible]

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